

Appendix IV

Notification Materials – Letter of Introduction, Project Brochure, and Request for Project Materials

[U.S. Dept. of Education Letterhead]

[Date]

[ECEPD Project Director Address]

Dear ECEPD Project Director:

I am pleased to announce that Child Trends has been selected by the U.S. Department of Education as the evaluator of the Early Childhood Educator Professional Development (ECEPD) program. The purpose of the study is to describe, using a variety of data sources, the structure of ECEPD partnerships, the characteristics and content of professional development activities supported by ECEPD grants, and the characteristics of participants in ECEPD activities. The study will also describe outcomes for participants and outcomes for children to the extent that they can be summarized from grantee evaluations. Finally, by aligning the descriptive findings with the five achievement indicators that have been established for the ECEPD program, the study will identify promising practices in professional development for early childhood educators. The attached brochure provides more details about the evaluator, Child Trends, and the evaluation design.

One important data collection activity in the evaluation involves interviews with all of the Project Directors from the 2003, 2004 and 2005 ECEPD grants. The purpose of the interview is to gather information about how your program is structured and how it functions – information that is not necessarily available in the Annual Performance Reports, which the Child Trends Research Team will also be reviewing as part of the overall evaluation of ECEPD. The telephone interview of Project Directors will take about 1.5 hours to complete, and will cover the following topics:

- ◆ Project Goals,
- ◆ Project Structure,
- ◆ Program Implementation,
- ◆ Program Activities,
- ◆ Characteristics of Participants,
- ◆ Supports and Incentives,
- ◆ Program Outcomes, and
- ◆ Promising Practices

The information you provide during the phone interview will be consolidated with the responses received from the other Project Directors, and summary information from the Project Director Interview will be presented in the evaluation report Child Trends submits to the U.S. Department of Education. Responses to this data collection will be used only for analytical purposes. The reports prepared for this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific project or individual. We will not provide information that identifies you or your project to anyone outside the

study team, except as required by law. The interview has received the appropriate clearance from OMB (OMB number 1875-NEW).

In order to schedule the telephone interview with you, we ask that you email Dr. Martha Zaslow, Project Director of the ECEPD Evaluation at Child Trends, with the best times and dates in the next two weeks for participating in this 1.5 hour-long conversation. Child Trends would like to schedule a call with you between 9 AM and 5 PM Eastern Standard Time sometime within the following set of dates: [ENTER TWO-WEEK SPAN OF TIME]

Enclosed is a copy of the interview questions that will be used. By reviewing the questions ahead of time, and following along during the interview, the interview itself will be completed with the least amount of burden to you.

For some grantees, additional telephone interviews will be arranged to go into further depth on specific issues about program implementation and program evaluation with key members of your project partnership and local evaluation team, respectively. At the end of the Project Director's Interview, the Child Trends researchers will ask for contact information for those individuals who should be included in Project Team and Evaluation Team group interviews, should your program be selected for this further aspect of the national study.

If you have any questions or concerns about the evaluation and the telephone interviews, please contact the following individuals at the U.S. Department of Education or at Child Trends:

James Maxwell
Project Officer
U.S. Department of Education
Policy and Program Studies Service
202-401-3571
James.Maxwell@ed.gov

Dr. Martha Zaslow
Project Director
Child Trends
202-572-6032
mzaslow@childtrends.org

The U.S. Department of Education is committed to conducting a comprehensive examination of the ECEPD program, and we respectfully request your cooperation in this effort. The time and attention you devote to the evaluation are critical to ensuring an accurate representation of the ECEPD program and its effects on early childhood educators and the children they serve. The results of the evaluation of the ECEPD program, in turn, will provide information that can strengthen early childhood

professional development programs in the future. Thank you in advance for your full participation in the evaluation activities.

Sincerely,

Alan Ginsburg
Director, Policy and Program Studies Service
Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development,
U.S. Department of Education



For more information about the ECEPD Evaluation, please feel free to contact:

Dr. Martha Zaslow

Project Director

Child Trends
4301 Connecticut Ave, NW
Suite 350
Washington, DC 20008
202-572-6032
mzaslow@childtrends.org

James P. Maxwell

Project Officer

U.S. Department of Education
Policy and Program Studies Service
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Room 6W259
Washington, DC 20202
202-401-3571
James.Maxwell@ed.gov

Rosemary Fennell

Project Manager

U.S. Department of Education
Policy and Program Studies Service
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Room 3C122
Washington, DC 20202
202-401-2425
Rosemary.Fennell@ed.gov



ED Contract Number: EC-04-CO-0038/0002

The 2003, 2004, and 2005 ECEPD Grantees are located in:

Alaska	Nebraska
Arizona	New York
California	North Carolina
Connecticut	Oregon
Florida	Tennessee
Massachusetts	Texas
Michigan	Washington, DC
Missouri	

EVALUATION OF THE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (ECEPD) PROGRAM

A Cross-Site Study Conducted by



**On behalf of
the U.S. Department of Education
Policy and Program Studies Service**



Background

This study will focus on the professional development activities implemented by 18 ECEPD grantees that received funds from 2003-2005. The study will:

- Describe the structure of ECEPD partnerships
- Describe ECEPD projects' goals and implementation
- Review the format and content of ECEPD activities
- Examine characteristics of the participants
- Synthesize the results of evaluations conducted by the ECEPD grantees
- Identify promising practices in the field of professional development for early childhood educators



In order to study these issues, Child Trends will conduct a review of relevant literature, project materials, grantee performance reports and evaluations. Child Trends will also administer in-depth interviews to project directors and other project team members.



Child Trends

Child Trends has been selected by the U.S. Department of Education as the evaluator of the ECEPD program.

Child Trends is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization that is dedicated to improving the lives of children and their families by conducting research and providing science-based information to improve the decisions, programs, and policies that affect children.

ECEPD Team Interviews

Child Trends will administer one or three interviews to ECEPD project teams. All ECEPD Project Directors from the 2003, 2004 and 2005 cohorts of grantees will be invited to participate in an interview to obtain information about the project structure, implementation, activities, and evaluation findings.

A subset of projects will be chosen for two additional interviews to follow up on key issues identified in the Project Directors' Interviews. One will be a group interview administered to members of the ECEPD project team, and one will be a group interview administered to the ECEPD evaluation team.

Responses to this data collection will be used only for analytical purposes. The reports prepared for this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific district or individual. Child Trends will not provide information that identifies you or your project to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.

Timeline and Findings

Child Trends will conduct interviews beginning in July, 2007. A final report for the project will be completed in January, 2008.





4301 Connecticut Ave NW, Suite 100
Washington DC. 20008

[Date]

[ECEPD Project Director Address}

Dear ECEPD Project Director:

As you know, Child Trends has been selected by the U.S. Department of Education as the evaluator of the Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Program (ECEPD).

One important piece of the evaluation involves the Project Director Interview that you participated in on [insert date of Project Director Interview].

As we described at the end of the interview, we are selecting a subset of ECEPD grantees from which we will gather further information about their project structure, activities and outcomes. Your ECEPD project has been selected for these additional data collection activities. We will be conducting two follow up interviews with members of your ECEPD partnership as we discussed during the interview with you.

In addition, we will be conducting a review of the training materials you use in your ECEPD program. This activity will provide a more detailed picture of the content and structure of the professional development activities funded by the ECEPD program. The materials you provide will be reviewed to learn more about the topics and format of the training as well as the expectations you have for the participants completing the training and procedures you follow for monitoring their progress. This information will be included in our evaluation report to the U.S. Department of Education.

We are requesting examples of the following materials that convey the content and requirements of the professional development offered in your ECEPD Program, for instance:

- ◆ Course descriptions, curriculum, and syllabi of training courses
- ◆ Materials and assignments distributed to participants
- ◆ Descriptions of requirements for degree programs/credential
- ◆ Descriptions of on-site activities such as mentoring or consultation
- ◆ Assessment tools that are used to understand how the knowledge and skills of the educators have changed as a result of the professional development activity (including assessments of classroom environment and practices)

If you think that there are additional materials that would help us understand the details of your ECEPD program that are not listed above, please submit them. To facilitate the organization of these materials, please make copies of the attached coversheet and attach

one completed coversheet to each set of materials that you submit. Please return the materials by [XX DATE] via [FedEx, US Mail] using the enclosed mailing label, which will cover all postal charges.

We know this task will require time and effort from you and your staff to prepare and organize the materials, and we thank you in advance for your participation in this important work.

Sincerely,

Martha Zaslow
Vice President, Research
Project Director, Evaluation of the Early Childhood Professional Development Program

ECEPD Materials Submission Form

Name of item:

Type of material:

- Course syllabi (specify course: _____)
- Course curriculum (specify course: _____)
- Course assignment/activity (specify course: _____)
- Application form
- Assessment tool
- Evaluation protocol
- CD/DVD (describe contents: _____)
- Videotape (describe contents: _____)
- Overview materials
- Other (please describe: _____)

Source:

- Developed by (specify author if ECEPD project partner):

- Purchased from:

- Adapted from:

- Other (please describe):

Please use this form to document each item that you submit from your ECEPD project. This form should be stapled or attached to the top of each submission.